November 2023
FAP Meeting Minutes

In attendance: Caroline Dahlstrom (Chair), Christine Higgins (Treasurer), Greg Marino (Admin), Rebecca Ashford (PreK-2), Susan Stewart (3/4), Chris Ford (Direction Center), Amanda Carr, Sara Roach, Molly Somaini, Timmel Albertson, Sarah Showalter, Jackie Ward, Josilyn Adams, Ashley Kraybill

Virtual attendees: Heather, Kate Walsh, Ali Lincoln

Meeting Called to Order: 8:33

Welcome & Introductions - Caroline Dahlstrom

- Craft Show
  - Big thank you to the co-organizers, Lindsay and Erin for doing a fantastic job
  - It was a great event and there was lots of positive feedback
  - This is a very popular craft fair with crafters and we never have trouble filling spots
  - Thank you to the volunteers who helped before, during and after the event
  - Thank you to Paw Print & Mail (local business and Williston parent) for generously donating their services to print all the signs and flyers

- Book Fair coming up next week - Nov 11-17th
  - During the school day and during evenings
  - Tuesday evening especially targeting the ABS families (typically 50% of sales on that night)
  - Looking for volunteers to sign-up to help out at the registers and bring in food
    - Ring up orders, explain the Sunshine Fund, explain tax, help kids find books, etc.
  - Some middle school students may help during the day

- Rebranding Committee
  - Is this something that people still want to do?
    - Yes, FAP is not something we can put on a T-shirt - due to urban definition
  - Been a busy time of year to work on this (Craft Fair, Book Fair, Grant committee, school events, holidays coming up, etc.)
  - Group needs to have a chair person to lead the group - none identified yet
  - Goals were outlined in document provided
    - Pros/cons of name to be considered
    - Timing of name change/roll-out
    - Marketing opportunities/possibilities?
    - Buy in and engagement from community
  - Would require a lot of help to change all related and supporting documentation
  - Item tabled until January/February when people have more time in their schedules

- Evening F.A.P. Meeting - coming up in January
  - We need more people to step up and help with the amount of work that this group would like to accomplish

- Forming Partnerships with local businesses

- Local business and Williston family owned business - Paw Print & Mail donated all the brochures and signs for the craft show
- Would love to see what other opportunities exist within our community to partner with local, parent owned businesses
- Possible product or advertising options such as
  - Big Basket Raffle
  - Silent auction
  - Sponsorship spots within our communications (School Bell or House Rep emails), etc.
- It looks like there might be a Williston Area Business Association (WABA)
- Check on Williston VT Parents Facebook Page - Marketing Mondays

- <u>Big Basket Raffle</u>
  - Date for this event this year is not on the calendar yet - typically April around Easter/school play
  - Emily and Becca looking to pass on the coordinating responsibilities for this event
  - Need people to step up this year to shadow and become the committee chairs for next year
  - Amount of people to assist with this committee has been low since pre-Covid
  - Hoping to increase participation to lighten the load
  - Need to be mindful not to over ask local businesses for contributions and connections
    - Don't to overlap with the Williston Runs group
    - Need to work with the FAP group to make sure it is done thoughtfully
    - A F.A.P. local/small business liaison would be helpful to help manage this (Jackie?)
      - Person would help put together a possible 'advertising pack'
      - Be willing to approach local businesses and have conversations about what we can offer in return for donations (ex: logo or advertising on our distributed materials, shout outs on social media, etc.)

- <u>Communications</u>
  - How can we best communicate with families? Reach a broader audience?
  - How can we get information about F.A.P. to families?
  - We want to continue to fund all the things we want to do.
  - Some families feel overwhelmed by the amount of information coming from the schools already
    - District, Williston School, School Bell, Teachers, FAP, House Reps, etc.
  - House Rep emails currently seem to be the best way to connect with families
    - 1 Newsletter a month
    - 1 email highlighting events
  - It helps to make subject lines catchy and fun
  - Tease out highlights/relevant information for grade level in bullet points at the top of the email
  - Use school/classroom approved pictures
  - Not a lot of traction on Facebook Page, mainly posting events, sign-ups
  - Desire to have authentic interactions
  - Suggestion to add more fun and engaging content instead of needs only
  - May need a person to help update social content regularly?
  - Suggestion to put together a 'year at a glance' annual school events calendar for families to anticipate, plan ahead and find ways to get involved in something they feel comfortable with
  - Could we post information about school events at local vendor/store bulletin boards?
  - Desire to build community starting from families entering Kindergarten - threads, social gatherings, meet-ups, etc.
  - Offline communications also needed
  - Community is not build from connections online
    - Possibility of creating a Welcome to Williston Schools packet containing

- Welcome Letter
- Info about F.A.P.
- Who to call or contact list - nurse, TAs, front desk, early dismissal notifications, etc.
- Map/layout of school (?)
- House/team organization
- Year at a glance calendar, etc.

Safe Routes to School Committee - Susan Stewart

- Working on promoting alternative ways to get to school - Williston Walks
- Focus on sustainability, exercise, awareness, reducing traffic congestion, etc.
- School gets 'perks' from local partners, such as Local Motion, for being a SRTS school
    - Local Motion provides bike trailer to help PE teachers motivate kids to learn to ride bikes
- Group is planning monthly walk to school events to build the routine
    - Kickoff event on 11/2 was a success
    - Next one planned for December 5th
- Some meeting spots already designated
    - Union Bank, Adam's Market, parking area by Federated Church, etc.
- Suggestion to have additional meeting spots planned for neighborhoods surrounding the schools
    - South Ridge, Pleasant Acres, Brennan Woods, Finney Crossing, etc.
- Looking for ways to share information
    - School Bell, Social Media, House Rep emails, monthly FAP email, etc.
- Exploring ideas for incentives (not food) to promote regular walking.
    - Swag, T-shirts, raffle tickets, water bottle stickers, stickers that say 'I walked to school today', prize drawings, etc.
    - Possibility of school therapy dogs to be a part of the walking experience?
    - Suggestion for additional 'Lucky U' type raffle experiences?
    - Connection to Beta to get a tour of their facility for students?
- Reminder to be mindful that not all students can walk to school or have the option to (equity)
    - Possibility of having buses drop off interested students at designated meet up locations?
- Ask to help with creation of a graphic or logo for this group
    - Susan to contact Amy Brewer (sp?) or Amanda C to help with this
    - Caroline to find T-shirt contact

Administration Report - Greg Marino

- Williston Schools 'North Start' for the year - Growth and Belonging for All

- Appreciations for:
    - Educational grants
    - Grant committee
    - Christine for financial organization
    - Annual fund donations
    - Town green sign updating

- School Safety Presentation - Link to slides

    - School Safety Team
        - A partnership with the school, library and town
        - Holds monthly meetings

        - Resources for crisis response, reviews protocols, references best practices, evaluates physical spaces, etc.
        - Building closer relationships builds more trust

    - Options based responses
        - Based on situational awareness
        - Anyone can pick up the phone and make the call
        - Options for staff to distract, delay, run, hide, fight, etc.
        - Drills are conducted a couple of times throughout the year to practice different approaches (Sept, Feb, April)
        - Families are notified about drills in advance
        - Goal is to do no harm, reduce stress and protect safety
        - Staff are provided with guides and scripts to hold discussion based conversations at developmentally appropriate level
        - Fun activities are planned after drills for wellness
        - Surveys are given after drills to collect data
        - Data sets from September drill presented

    - Greg had to leave before delivering rest of his content

Financial Report - Christine Higgins - Document Link (using a photo right now, is this okay?)

- **Taxes -** Document Link? (I don't have a copy of this)
    - Last year the FAP bylaws were amended to include a tax presentation from the Treasurer annually at the November FAPAC meeting
    - F.A.P. was reinstated as a nonprofit organization last year with retroactive status for Covid years
    - 990E Tax schedule being filed on 11/9 via 990.org website prior to November 15th deadline

- **Annual Fund**
    - Currently 128 families have contributed to the Annual Fund since August 2023
        - Just under $9,000
        - Average gift of $70 per donor
        - Last year we set a goal of raising $16,000 by end of the 2023-2024 school year
    - Goal is to reach 150 donor participation by Thanksgiving
    - Reminder to make sure people are connecting the F.A.P. group with the Annual Fund
        - Historically, the Annual Fund was called 'Williston Wins' and marketing would list out all the ways that funds were used. Some people only wanted to support certain programs and trips and not others. The name and model was changed to show the direct connection to funds being used for field trips and activities
    - Having an Annual Fund saves teachers, parents and school staff members valuable time by avoiding having to collect and process checks for each trip.

    - How to do this? Any ideas?
    - Suggested email sent to families from teachers
        - Connect to trips they have already been on with pictures, share stories
        - Suggest teachers be transparent about how much these trips cost per student
        - Teachers need to submit field trip plans to administration and can share where they are going with families this year
    - Suggesting House Reps also share with their next email

        - Need to send the message that the Annual Fund money is coming back to families in the form of class field trips and directly impacts their child
    - Suggestion to make bookmarks with QR code to give out (possibly at Book Fair)?
    - Ask for clarification about what is the 'right amount' for families to donate per student
    - Suggestion to increase donation by $5 to support those who cannot afford to donate
    - Information needed for people who are able to get company matching
    - Would like to find a way to reliably write thank yous to individuals for donating on a regular basis

- **Budget**
    - Craft Fair was a huge success
    - Great event, very positive
    - Received more revenue than expected
    - Finalizing and reimbursing remaining expenses

Meeting Adjourned 10:32am

Ran out of time before Staff Reports were shared with the full group. Please find below:

ABS Staff Reports - Becca Ashford

Pre-K is studying what makes a family, and they are learning about the students' families in their classroom. They are also learning about different forms of transportation, because they often need transportation to get to their families! One class is working on identifying five emotions; happy, sad, mad, excited, and tired. They are talking about how some of those emotions put you into the red zone and strategies around how they can get back to the green zone.

Explorers (K) students are continuing their seasonal studies and diving deeper into beginning literacy work and number sense work. They are excited about their teamwide Fall Food Drive and they will be walking to the Williston Food Shelf in December to deliver their donations!

Starlings (K) have continued to work through their literacy and math curriculum and have begun their seasonal studies on weather changes, hibernation, and migration. In the coming weeks leading up to November break, they will begin to talk about gratitude, empathy, and how they can positively impact the communities they live in, learn in, and grow in!

Harmony (1-2) started up their first WIN Intervention cycle of this school year. W.I.N. Stands for "What I Need." This 30 minute block three afternoons a week is an opportunity for all students to get an extra dose of what they specifically need to work on as a learner in a small group setting. Some of their current WIN groups include: social-emotional learning, literacy, math, engineering, and handwriting.

Horizon (1-2) students have been working hard on their writing units. Some classes have finished up their small moment stories and were able to share them. They are now starting to write realistic fiction. Other classes are working on being an expert. They are writing All About books or a How To Book.

Synergy (1-2) had their family harvest lunch yesterday with a great turn out. They appreciate all the family support, from sending in cider, bread and butter, and cups, to making and serving soup, and helping to set up and clean up. They are in their 5th week of WIN block.

3/4 House Reports - Susan Stewart

All 3-4 classroom teachers are engaged in building-based PD in literacy and math. We are fortunate to have our literacy and math leaders bringing back the studio model in which teachers work with one of them over the course of several weeks, then share that work with colleagues in meetings, as we did yesterday (11/8) afternoon. Then the colleagues visit the classroom to see the work described in action. This happens both in literacy and in math. After we visit the studio classrooms, we meet again (Wednesday PD) to debrief. We find it to be some of the most powerful professional learning experiences we have each year.

Mosaic:

- Mosaic 4th graders have been focusing on the elements of story as each class studies a different Kate Dicamillo book. Students are beginning to have powerful discussions about the books and very deep insights into what they are reading.
- Mosaic 4th grade has also been focusing on their second math unit about multiplication and division. Students are proud of all the different ways that they can show their thinking.
- The entire Mosaic team meets every Friday to celebrate students and create a deeper sense of community.

Kaleidoscope:

- SEL work focused on understanding the power of stories we tell ourselves
- Science work continuing to learn about the brain and how the various parts work together to form how we interact in the world
- Open House Friday am
- Starting work on a team performance in early December

Equinox:

- Social Studies Work, South America Workshops: Geography, Culture, Flags, Animals
- Flynn trip to see Ndlovu Youth Choir (South African)
- Regular Kiva meetings-highlight student work, pledge, birthday celebrations, wildcat way, team building
- Practicing scenarios to elicit kind behavior based on the ABC's presented in assemblies
- We are working on Handwriting
- We had a fire safety presentation from the amazing firefighters of the Williston Fire Department

5-8 Staff Reports not shared at this meeting.

Direction Center - Chris Ford

- Currently, school social workers and school counselors are coordinating thanksgiving week food support and holiday gift giving in December. Several local churches, organizations, and individuals reach out to the school and provide much needed support to many families (over 40 between both ABS and WCS). We really appreciate all the support and are happy to help connect families to the generous donations.
- WCS is continuing to focus on student behavior. Monthly meetings focus on our behavior systems and looking at data to help our school improve our support and help kids make positive behavior choices. Not surprising, hallway, bus dismissal times, and lunch and recess are times when we see more challenging behaviors. Tuesdays seem to be more challenging for our 3rd and 4th graders, and Wednesdays for our 5th - 8th graders.
- Our CY Mentoring program held its kickoff family dinner night last week. Becky Martell, mentoring coordinator, along with the WCS mentoring committee and our wonderful school kitchen staff, served over 200 people (mentees and their families, along with mentors) and all enjoyed a great night of food and events to officially kick off this menoting year. Currently there are 58 mentor pairs in WCS.